

St. Michael the Archangel  
Russian Orthodox Church  
Marshall  
Alaska

HABS No. AK-67

HABS

AK

4-MAR,

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PHOTOGRAPHS  
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ST. MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH

HABS No. AK-67

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Location: Marshall, on the Yukon River, Alaska.

Significance: This modest, 1960 church contains notable icons -- and possibly the iconostas -- from the 1886 church at St. Michael.

Description: The church is a wood-framed, rectangular building, sided with plywood. The gable roof over the nave, covered with corrugated metal, has a cupola and onion dome. The gable roof of the sanctuary is lower. The vestibule has a shed roof.

The interior is finished with plywood. The most significant feature of the building is the five-bay iconostas. Compact in size, it does not fill the width of the building. The old icons, with geometric and foliated ornament, do not fit the iconostas well. Moved here from other buildings, the iconostas and icons do not seem made for each other.

History: The church was built by a group of villagers in 1960, and expanded in 1984, when the western third of the nave and eastern third of the sanctuary were added.

In 1957, the icons were moved from the abandoned church at St. Michael to Ohogamiut, a village just upriver from Marshall. In 1960, when this church was built, the icons were moved from Ohogamiut to Marshall.

The church at St. Michael was built in 1886 as the headquarters of the Russian Orthodox mission on the Yukon, thus explaining the splendor of these icons.

Sources: Interviews with Alexander Isaac and Nick Isaac, Marshall, Alaska, May 25, 1990.

Historian: Alison K. Hoagland, HABS Historian, 1990.